

CLAIMS

1. A helm (5) for controlling the rudder of a boat, and including:

5 - a base (6) on top of which is an elongate column (10) extending along an axis,

 - a wheel (12) mounted to turn on the column (10) about a transverse axis, and

 - rudder control means controlled by the wheel,

10 which helm is characterized in that it further includes means for neutralizing the rudder control means and in that the column (10) is mounted to rotate relative to the base (6) about its axis to assume a service position in which said neutralization means are deactivated and at least one rest
15 position in which the wheel (12) is offset angularly by at least approximately a quarter-turn relative to the service position and said neutralization means are activated.

2. A helm according to claim 1, characterized in that said neutralization means are controlled by rotation of the
20 column (10) relative to the base (6).

3. A helm according to claim 1 or claim 2, characterized in that the rudder control means are permanently interengaged with the wheel (12) and the neutralization means include means for preventing rotation of
25 the wheel (12) about its transverse axis.

4. A helm according to claim 3, characterized in that said means for preventing rotation of the wheel (12) include a toothed portion (23) fastened to the wheel (12) and a detent (21) fastened to the base (6) and disposed to come
30 into contact with said toothed portion (23), thereby immobilizing it, when the column (10) is in the rest position.

5. A helm according to claim 1 or claim 2, characterized in that the neutralization means include means
35 for immobilizing a member interengaged with the rudder

control means.

6. A helm according to claim 5, characterized in that the rudder control means include a column shaft (34) mounted to turn in the column (10) and driven in rotation by the wheel (12) and said immobilization means include a disk (37) fastened to said column shaft (34).

7. A helm according to claim 6, characterized in that said disk forms a cam adapted to exert a force on stopping means attached to the base (6) when the column (10) is in the rest position.

8. A helm according to claim 6, characterized in that said disk (37) is coaxial with the column shaft (34) and in that said immobilization means further include brake calipers (38) embracing the disk (37) and adapted to immobilize it.

9. A helm according to any one of claims 1 to 8, characterized in that it further includes a device for preventing rotation of the column (10).

10. A helm according to claim 9, characterized in that said device for preventing rotation of the column (10) includes an at least partly annular slide (25) attached to the base (6) and a radially retractable finger (26) on the column (10) and cooperating with the slide (25), said slide (25) including a first housing (27) adapted to receive the finger (26) when the column (10) is in the service position and a second housing (27) adapted to receive the finger (26) when the column (10) is in the rest position.

11. A helm according to any one of claims 1 to 10, characterized in that the rudder control means include:

- a first ring (23) coaxial with and attached to the shaft (13) of the wheel (12),
- a second ring mounted to turn about a transverse axis,
- flexible transmission means (24) connecting the first and second rings, and
- transmission means connecting the second ring to the

rudder.

12. A helm according to any one of claims 1 to 10, characterized in that the rudder control means include:

- a hydraulic pump (29) attached to the column (10) and operated by rotation of the shaft (13) of the wheel (12),
- a hydraulic rudder actuator connected to said pump (29), and
- a valve (31) in the hydraulic circuit between the pump (29) and the actuator, adapted to close the circuit and actuated by rotation of the column (10) so that the valve (31) is open when the column (10) is in the service position and the valve (31) is closed when the column (10) is in the rest position.

13. A helm according to any one of claims 1 to 10, characterized in that the rudder control means include:

- a column shaft (34) attached at a first end to a transverse lever (36) and at a second end to a first bevel gear (33) coaxial with said shaft (34),
- a second bevel gear (32) attached to the shaft (13) of the wheel (12), coaxial therewith, and disposed to mesh with the first bevel gear (33) to form a concurrent axis gear, and
- transmission means connecting the transverse lever (36) to the rudder.

14. A boat (1) including a cockpit (2) equipped with a pivoting helm (5) according to any one of claims 1 to 13, the column (10) being disposed perpendicularly to the deck (7) of the cockpit (2).

15. A boat according to claim 14, characterized in that the base (10) is fixed to the deck (7) of the cockpit (2) so that the wheel (12) is transverse to the general direction of the boat (1) when the column (10) is in the service position and in that the angular offset terminating in the rest position is a quarter-turn so that, in the rest position, the wheel (12) is parallel to the general direction

of the boat (1).